

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

*****news release

BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

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MONOMOY ISLAND IN MASSACHUSETTS IS FIRST WILDLIFE REFUGE CONSIDERED FOR WILDERNESS SYSTEM

Monomoy Island, near Cape Cod in Massachusetts, will be the first National Wildlife Refuge to be considered for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System, the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife has announced. A public hearing on the proposal will be held at 9 a.m., January 11, in Chatham, Mass.

Daniel H. Janzen, retired Director of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, will be the hearing officer.

Under the Wilderness Act of 1964, every roadless area of 5,000 contiguous acres or more and every roadless island within the National Wildlife Refuge System is to be reviewed by 1974.

Monomoy Island is a 2,600-acre roadless island of dunes and sand flats, fresh-water marshes and meadows. Although it is the site of a historic cast-iron lighthouse, there is little other evidence of man's use of the area.

Ornithologists consider Monomoy Island unequalled as a shorebird area. Thousands of yellowlegs, black-bellied plovers, sanderlings, and various small sandpipers are found there. Its diversified natural habitat is used for nesting, resting, and feeding by over 300 species of birds. Mussel beds off the ocean side attract flocks of eiders and scoters numbering up to half a million. Monomoy also has an interesting variety of mammals.

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